REMARKS

Applicant appreciates the detailed examination evidenced by the Final Official Action mailed January 22, 2008 (hereinafter the Final Official Action). Applicant also appreciates the Examiner's courtesy in an interview on April 16, 2008, wherein the Applicant's representative and the Examiner discussed potential amendments to the independent claims in view of the cited references.

As discussed in the interview on April 16, 2008, Applicant has amended the independent claims herein to further recite that, for example, addresses for decoding are received within the controller circuit without passing through the general operation processor circuit as recited in amended independent Claim 1. Amended independent Claim 20 includes similar recitations.

Applicant respectfully submits that these recitations further distinguish the patentable subject matter from the cited references. For example, the material cited from US Patent No. 6,839,774 to Ahn (hereinafter "Ahn") show that there are two different interfaces used to transfer data to the non-volatile memory 130 (see Figure 2 of Ahn). The first interface is a user mode that utilizes the CPU 120 to transfer addresses to the controller circuit 160 via the address bus 172. The second interface, referred to as "tool mode", transfers data and addresses via the tool mode interface 164 in the controller circuit 160. The addresses passed to the controller circuit 160 via the tool mode interface 164 and are not decoded. Rather, the addresses are passed through the tool mode interface 164 and stored directly in the address register 166a. Accordingly, no address decoding is provided in the mode where addresses are passed to the controller 160 via the tool mode interface. In contrast, in Ahn's user mode, the CPU 120 passes addresses to the address decoder 166 for decoding and storage in the address register 166a. Accordingly, the only decoding of addresses in Ahn appears to be those which are received via the CPU 120. Again, the tool mode interface 164 does not appear to use any type of address decoding.

It is clear that the amended recitations of the independent claims are further distinguishable from Ahn in that the addresses to be decoded are provided without passing through the general operation processor circuit. In particular, as shown in Figure 2 of Ahn,

the addresses passed by the tool mode interface are not decoded and, further, the only address decoding in Ahn is performed by address decoder 166, however, these addresses are provided via the CPU 120. Applicant respectfully submits that these additional recitations clearly distinguishes over Ahn. Further, there is no disclosure suggesting in US Patent No. 6,028,445 to Lawman (hereinafter "Lawman") of these additional recitations.

Applicant also wishes to point out that even though the independent claims have been amended herein to further distinguish the claimed subject matter, the original un-amended claim language is sufficient to distinguish over Ahn. For example, the un-amended claims recite that the addresses received for decoding are specified as part of the data structure, which includes a head field and a command/address field data structure that is received by the controller circuit. As discussed above, the only address decoding provided by Ahn is that performed by the address decoder 166e. Ahn further makes clear that any data structures are processed by the CPU 120 and therefore, any header fields or data structures provided with data to the CPU have been stripped away by the CPU 120 which provides the address and data to the controller circuit 160. Therefore, as understood by Applicant, the existing recitations of the un-amended claims are adequate to distinguish over Ahn. In other words, even if providing addresses via the bus 172 to the address decoder 166e somehow could be applied to the pending claims, the original claims clearly specify that the address provided for decoding is included in a data structure that includes a head field and command/address data structure. There is no discussion or suggestion in Ahn of this type of data structure to be used anywhere except the communication with the CPU 120. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that the pending claims (*i.e.*, the claims without entry of the present Amendment After Final) are sufficient to distinguish over Ahn and Lawman.

Applicant respectfully requests entry of the present Amendment and the allowance of all claims in due course for at least the reasons described herein. If any informal matters arise the Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned at 919-854-1400 for resolution of any outstanding issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATION OF TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being transmitted via the Office electronic filing system in accordance with § 1.6(a)(4) to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office on May 19, 2008.

Kirsten S. Carlos